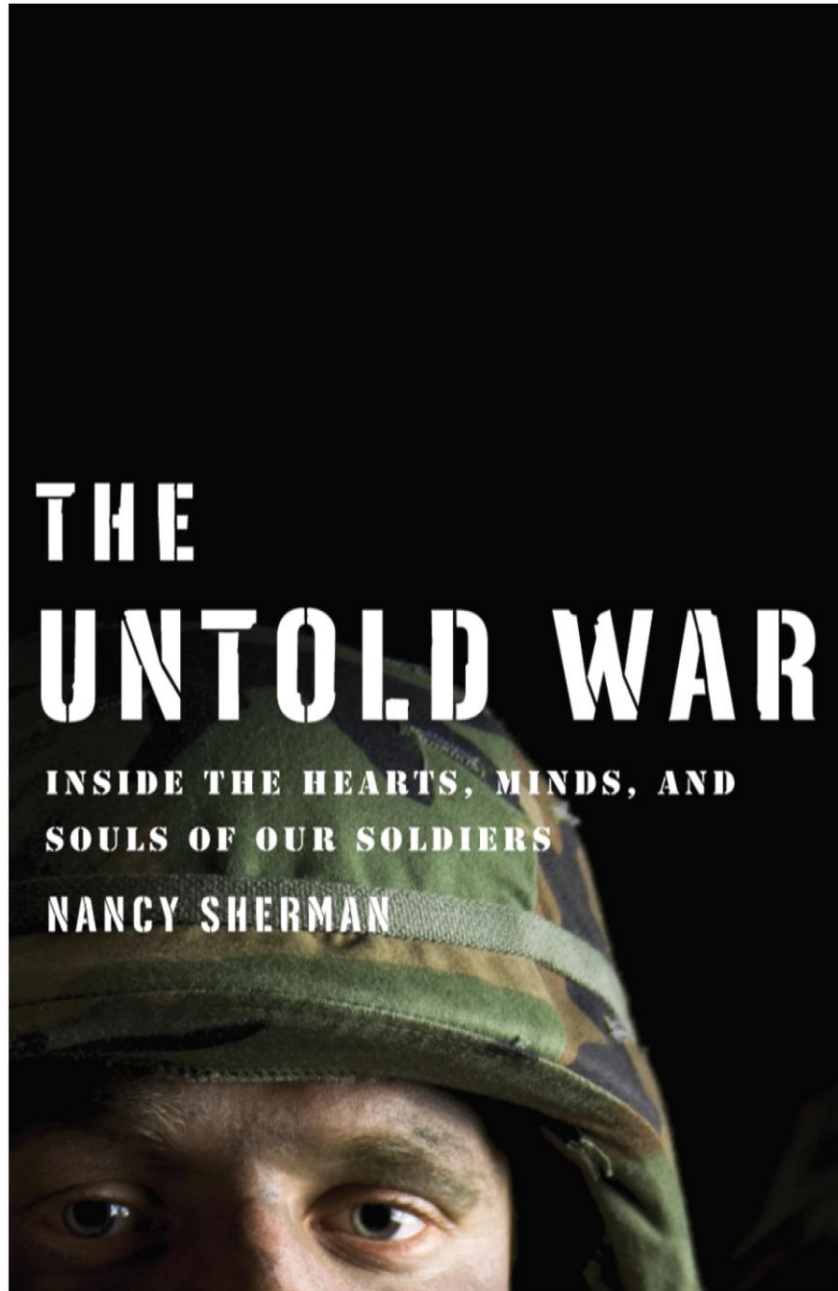
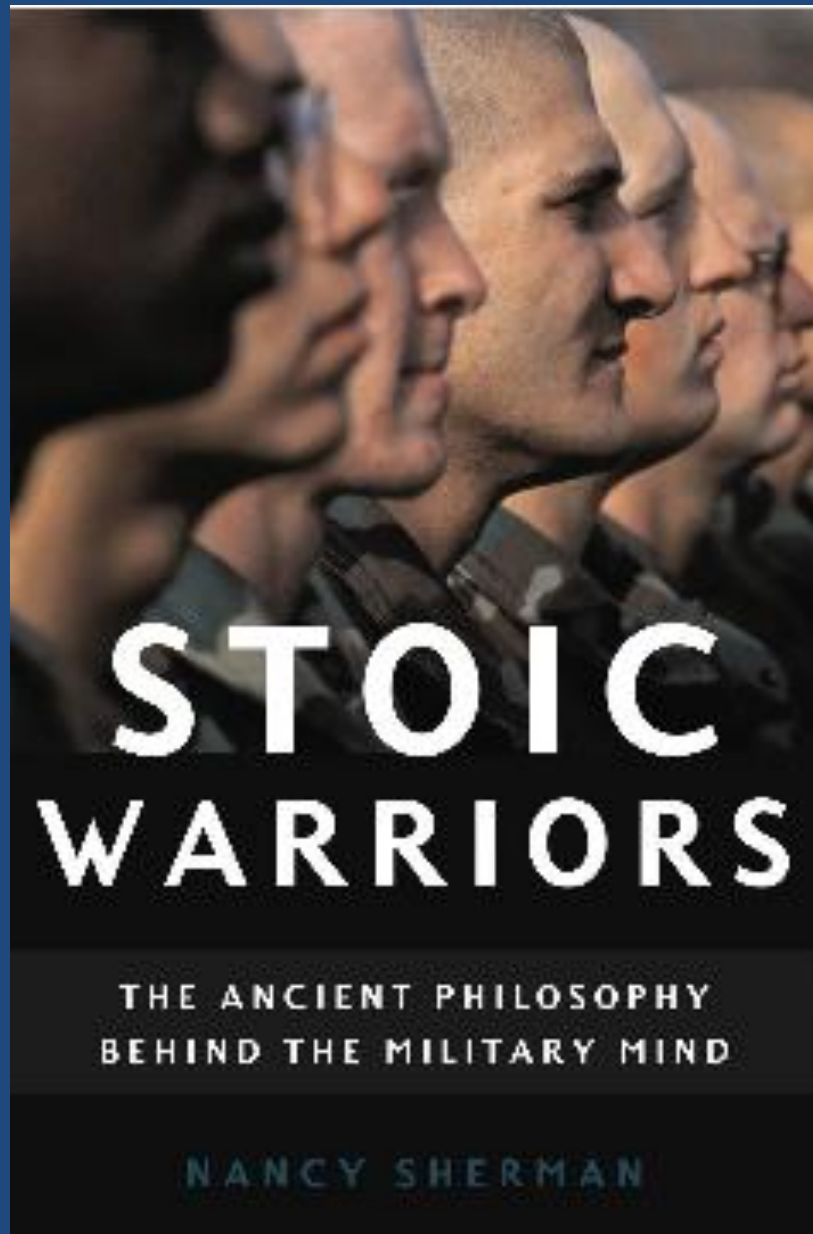


THE UNTOLD WAR

INSIDE THE HEARTS, MINDS, AND
SOULS OF OUR SOLDIERS

NANCY SHERMAN





STOIC WARRIORS

THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY
BEHIND THE MILITARY MIND

NANCY SHERMAN

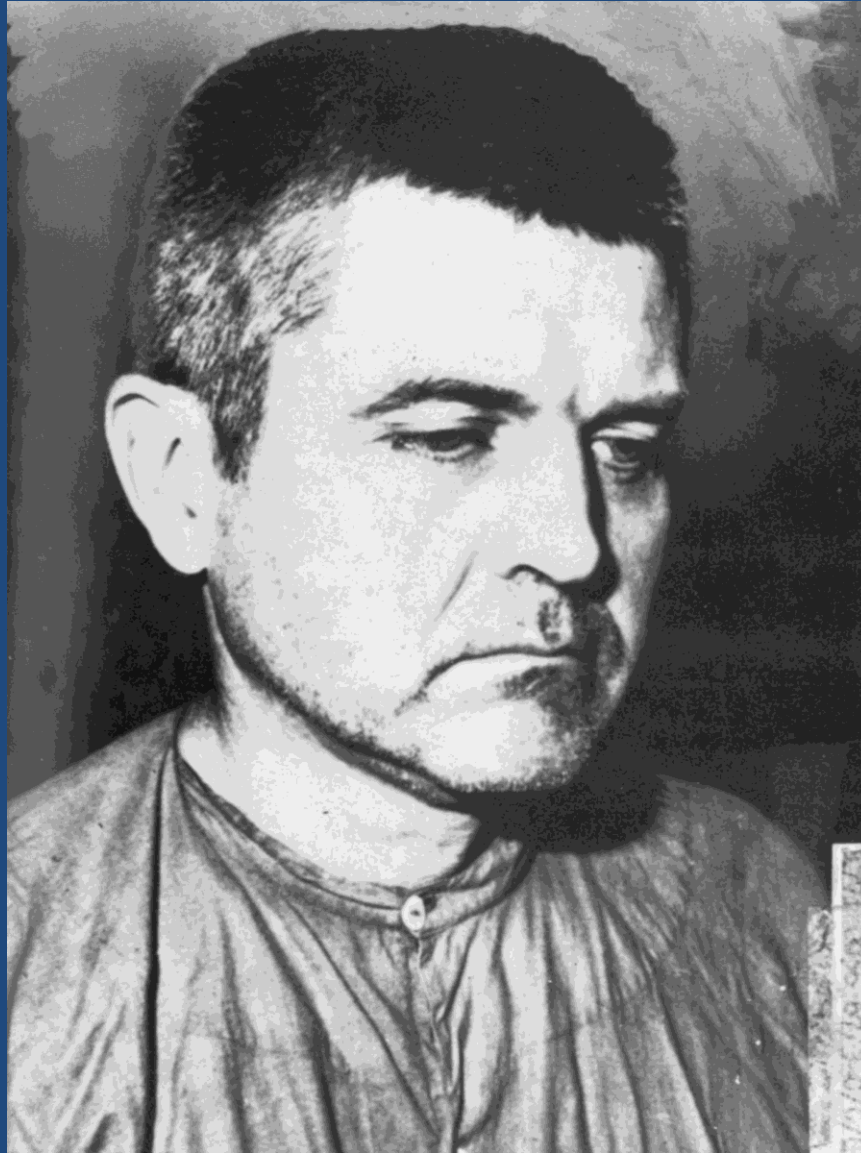
Marcus Aurelius: *Meditations*



Stockdale, fighter pilot



Stockdale, POW



Stoicism as the military ethos

- “Sucking-it up”: a military mantra
- Stoicism: Empowerment and Control. Drawing the stripe between what is in your control and what isn't
- The attractions of Epictetus for the military
- “Of what is not up to us, say ‘they are nothing to me’”
- “the indifferents”: luck, body, honor, stripes

Letting go of Emotions

- Emotions as sticky attachments to what is outside your control
- They are vulnerabilities
- Root them out through cognitive therapy: change appraisals
- Early cognitive therapists: the original CBT

The Cost of being too Stoic

- Overridealizing the idea of control and invulnerability
- The myth of the invincible warrior
- Stigmatizing mental health needs as moral weakness
- Overridealizing the ideal of self-sufficiency
- Seneca: “I am the doctor but also the patient.”

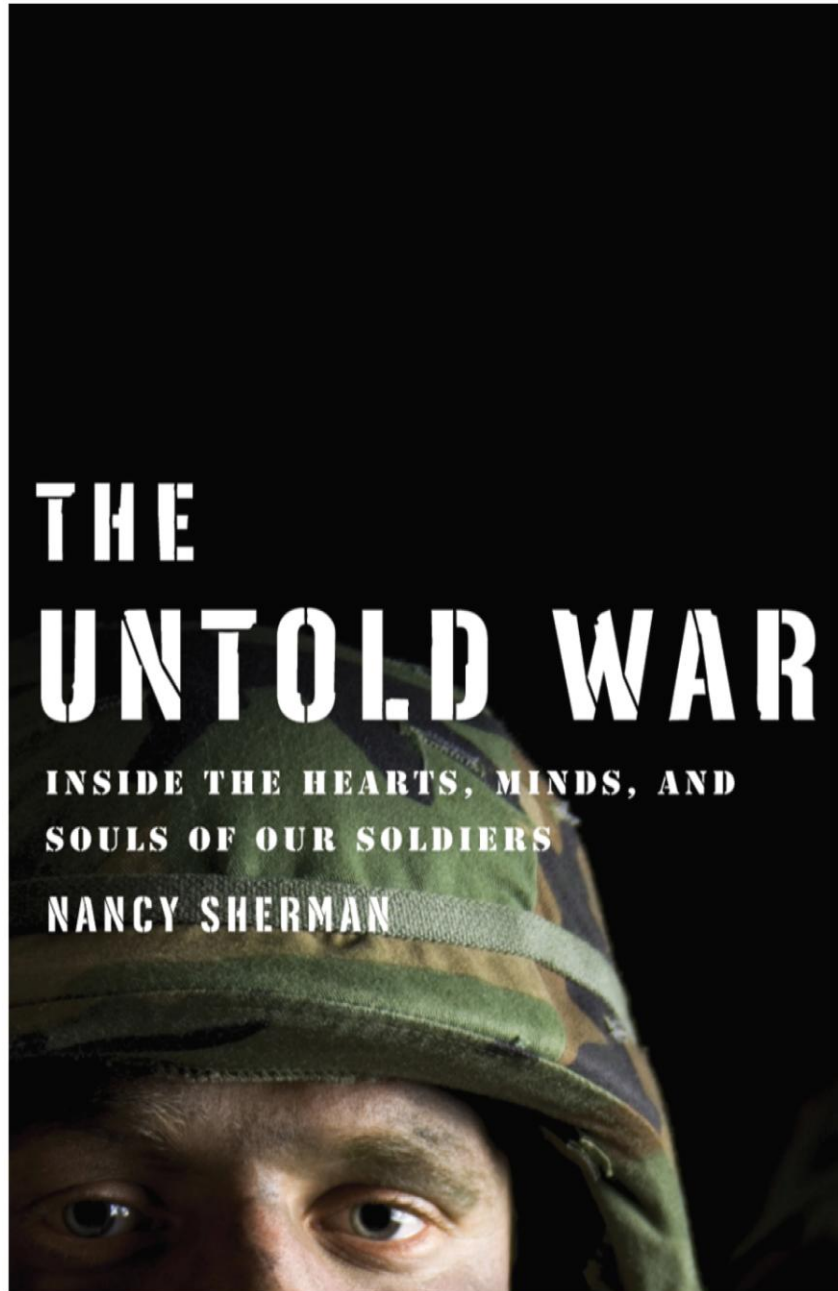
Cicero's Warning

- “It is not within our power to forget or gloss over circumstances which we believe to be evil...They tear at us, buffet us, goad us, scorch us, stifle us—and you [Stoics] tell us to forget about them?” Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* 3.35

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Giving Voice to My Father's Silence

- My father's dog tags
- Silently carrying the weight of war for 65 years
- A member of a laconic generation of warriors
- Breaking the Silence: Interviewing 40 warriors

The *Untold War*: what philosophy and psychology don't talk about

- In philosophy, traditionally, just war theory
 - *Jus ad bellum* (justice in going to war)
 - *Jus in bello* (just conduct in war)
- In psychology, primarily
 - clinical notions of pathology
 - posttraumatic stress disorder (NB stigma of “disorder”)
 - (PTSD) and traumatic brain injury (TBI)
 - clinical notions of resilience

Deafening Silence

- About moral conflicts of war shouldered by soldiers in the moral fog of war.
- About the moral emotions of war
- That psychological anguish is also moral anguish
- About taking on “identities” and not just roles
- About being one person who has different, often conflicting identities

From Civilian to Soldier



For Cause or Comrade



Payback



The Guilt They Carry



Interrogation: In the Moral Shadowland



In the Face of Torture



Loosening the Stoic Armor



Body and Body Parts



From Soldier to Civilian



The Moral Fog of War. Accident Guilt, Luck Guilt, Civilian Death Guilt



Feeling Guilt

- Holding yourself “responsible” for what you can’t fully control, and yet what falls under your command “responsibility”
- Guilt as irrational? Something to get over?
- Guilt as rational, in the sense of therapeutic?
- Guilt as redemptive. Humanizing. Reclaiming humanity when war and bureaucratic military cadres squeeze it out

Three kinds of guilt in just killing

- Accident Guilt
- Luck Guilt
- Collateral Damage Guilt

Guilt vs. Shame

- Guilt inward directed emotion; about wronging another
- Shame inward directed emotion; about personal defects of character, falling short of ideals or status; a matter of social discredit: how others view you. Aristotle: All eyes are upon you.
- Shame (*aidos*) from *aidola*: as if genitals are exposed and in need of a fig leaf

A case of accident guilt

- Army Maj. John Prior and the Bradley tank malfunction
- Nonculpable; excused yet feels profound guilt
- Strictly speaking, not moral but causal responsibility
- The guilt may be excessive, in need of relief, but not unreasonable, and even morally admirable. An important expression of personal agency and humanity

Nietzsche

- Nietzsche: “bad conscience” doesn’t grow in the soul where you would most expect it—in prisons where there are actually “guilty” parties.
- He follows Spinoza: rather “the bite of conscience” has to do with an offense “where something has gone unexpectedly wrong here.” Unforeseen, and often unforeseeable accident

A gloss on Melanie Klein

- Guilt is not always fear of retaliative punishment à la Freud
- It may be rooted in empathy and desire to repair what we destroy.
- Implicit is a notion of moral empowerment in seeking reparation

Luck Guilt

- Maj. Mooney, March 2003: Nazariah, 80 killed and 80 wounded in one day.
- Home from war in scenic, air-conditioned Annapolis
- Home when there is so much “lost potential”
- Luck guilt exacerbated by abrupt ruptures from unit
- Siegfried Sassoon, WW I officer and poet:
 - “I am banished from the patient men who fight...
Should to aching shoulder”

Brother/Sisterhood as Motherhood

- Brother/sisterhood as involving “mothering” activity
 - Caregiving, profound emotional love, willingness to die as if for your own child. Never leave a buddy behind
 - The conflict of that soldier’s creed in COIN, where restraint of lethal fire is required in order to protect and defend civilians.

Luck guilt/survivor guilt

- “Survivor guilt” as specific form of luck guilt
- Holocaust term: those who survived felt they were the “living dead”
- “merely remaining alive was a betrayal of the dead”
- Earlier examples: Achilles guilt over the death of Patroclus: He can’t undo the switch. In this case, he arranged the switch

Luck guilt cont'd

- To be the lucky one, the survivor, feels like a betrayal of solidarity
- To feel guilt: feels like a way to undo the betrayal; a perceived form of retaking control/moral empowerment in repairing the rupture
- Compare the family and unconscious bookkeeping system among siblings: Arnold Modell

Collateral Damage Guilt

- Killing as part of attempt to discriminate legitimate from illegitimate targets
- Even if limited collateral damage permissible by war conventions and local rules of engagement, it is still morally hard for the individual to live with its aftermath

Killing innocent children

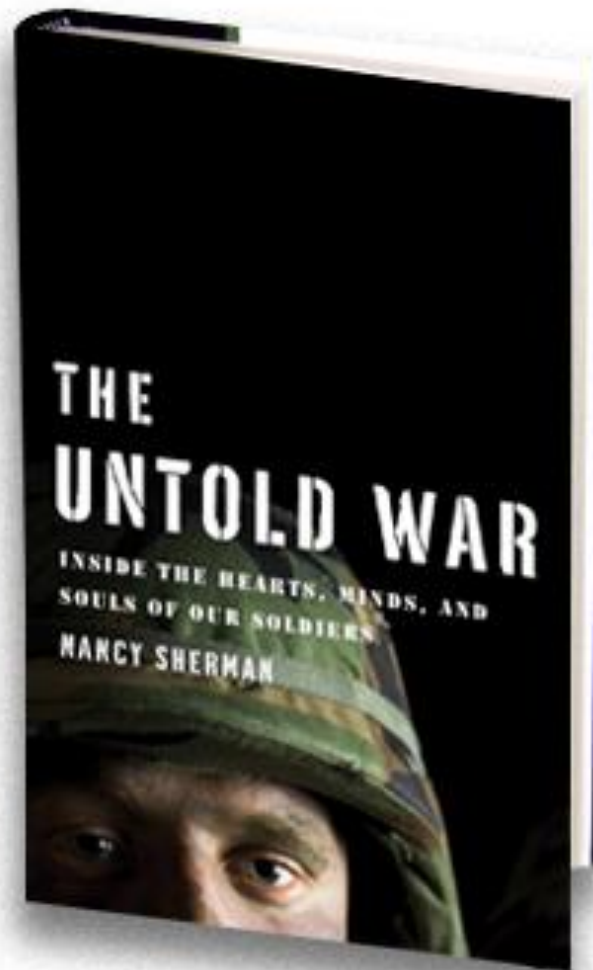
- A peculiar kind of vulnerability: Perhaps the soldier regresses to his own childhood or that of his/her child's
- The adult is supposed to construct moral order. The soldier is a law enforcer/maker
- Caught in roles: the soldier as police vs war fighter
- The heavy moral weight of failing to fulfill that role duty *before an innocent child*

The view from the air

- Remote collateral damage and the moral insulation of distance
- Foreseen but unintended harm when it is up close and personal: it is less likely to seem permissible (Josh Greene 2008)

Fighting Internal Wars

- Instability/ambivalence about what soldiers see as morally permissible in war.
- Cases of what is conventionally accepted as just conduct and not culpable legally or morally seem different when up close and personal.
- Guilt may not be so irrational or grandiose, but an important way a soldier reclaims humanity in war.
- TREAT and RELIEVE. BUT DON'T DISMISS



The Untold War:
Inside the Hearts, Minds, and Souls of Soldiers

Norton: 2010

Stoic Warriors: Oxford 2005

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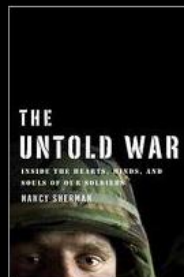
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PUBLICATIONS

—*New York Times*, 3/7/2010

"The Untold War: Inside the Hearts, Minds, and Souls of Our Soldiers," by Nancy Sherman, attempts, as its subtitle indicates, to expose the complexities of the soldier's "inner war." Sherman rightly construes it as a national "duty" to understand the soldier's "healthy struggle . . . to remain alive to civilian sensibilities without losing the . . . steel and resilience" essential to military service and to facilitate healing of the psychic rifts war can cause. This is not a duty Americans have always been keen to